

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A document control apparatus for accumulating and controlling electronic documents accessible from outside comprising:

5 period controlling means for storing document control period information per a unit of an electronic document when registering a document;

 access prohibiting means for prohibiting an access from outside to an electronic document whose document
10 control period has expired; and

 period updating means for updating said document control period per a unit of an electronic document.

2. The document control apparatus according to
15 claim 1, further comprising:

 document registering means for registering, updating and deleting said electronic document;

 document searching means for searching said accumulated and stored electronic document; and

20 document transferring means for transmitting and receiving electronic document data with an external apparatus.

3. The document control apparatus according to
25 claim 1, wherein said period controlling means controls said document control period information together with

a body of said electronic document embedded in said electronic document.

4. The document control apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said electronic document comprises:

control information of an electronic document including said document control period information, a document owner, an access authority holder, or a document name;

10 attached information of an electronic document including summary information of a document or index information; and

a body of an electronic document requested for registration from outside.

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5. The document control apparatus according to claim 1, wherein it is possible to alternatively set link information indicating a location of an entity of data forming said electronic document in a predetermined information region, and accumulate and control said entity of data in a storage location that is physically different from said predetermined information region.

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25 6. The document control apparatus according to claim 1, further comprising charging means for allowing an access from outside to said electronic document

whose document control period has expired by imposing a predetermined charge.

7. The document control apparatus according to
5 claim 6, wherein it is possible to store an electronic document that is most frequently accessed from outside for a fixed time of period and in a fixed volume with a special charge system different from a regular charge.

10 8. The document control apparatus according to claim 2, wherein said document searching means notifies an outside accessing party of storing period information as said control period information of said electronic document set by said period controlling
15 means in advance according to a remaining period when searching and inspecting said electronic document.

9. The document control apparatus according to claim 1, further comprising:
20 document accumulating means for accumulating said electronic document data;
user accumulating means for accumulating registered users;
charge accumulating means for accumulating charge
25 information; and
history accumulating means for accumulating electronic document access histories.

10. The document control apparatus according to claim 2, wherein, when update or deletion of said electronic document is instructed from outside, said document registering means determines whether or not to
5 accept the update or the deletion of said electronic document based on access authority information set in advance.

11. A document control system comprising:
10 a document control apparatus for accumulating and controlling an electronic document; and
an external apparatus to which accumulation control service of said electronic document is provided from said document control apparatus, wherein said
15 document control apparatus comprises:
period controlling means for storing document control period information per a unit of an electronic document when registering a document;
access prohibiting means for prohibiting an access
20 from outside to an electronic document whose document control period has expired; and
period updating means for updating said document control period per a unit of an electronic document.

25 12. The document control system according to claim 11, wherein said document control apparatus further comprises:

document registering means for registering,
updating and deleting said electronic document;

document searching means for searching said
accumulated and stored electronic document; and

5 document transferring means for transmitting and
receiving electronic document data with an external
apparatus.

10 13. The document control system according to
claim 11, wherein said period controlling means of said
document control apparatus controls said document
control period information together with a body of said
electronic document embedded in said electronic
document.

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14. The document control system according to
claim 11, wherein said electronic document comprises:
control information of an electronic document
including said document control period information, a
20 document owner, an access authority holder, or a
document name;

attached information of an electronic document
including summary information of a document or index
information; and

25 a body of an electronic document requested for
registration from outside.

15. The document control system according to claim 11, wherein it is possible to alternatively set link information indicating a location of an entity of data forming said electronic document in a predetermined information region, and accumulate and control said entity of data in a storage location that is physically different from said predetermined information region.

10 16. The document control system according to claim 11, wherein said document control apparatus further comprises charging means for allowing an access from outside to said electronic document whose document control period has expired by imposing a predetermined charge.

15 17. The document control system according to claim 16, wherein said document control apparatus is capable of storing an electronic document that is most frequently accessed from outside for a fixed time of period and in a fixed volume with a special charge system different from a regular charge.

20 18. The document control system according to claim 12, wherein said document searching means of said document control apparatus notifies an outside accessing party of storing period information as said

control period information of said electronic document set by said period controlling means in advance according to a remaining period when searching and inspecting said electronic document.

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19. The document control system according to claim 11, wherein said document control apparatus further comprises:

document accumulating means for accumulating said
10 electronic document data;

user accumulating means for accumulating
registered users;

charge accumulating means for accumulating charge
information; and

15 history accumulating means for accumulating
electronic document access histories.

20. The document control system according to claim 12, wherein, when update or deletion of said
20 electronic document is instructed from outside, said document registering means of said document control apparatus determines whether or not the update or the deletion of said electronic document should be accepted based on access authority information set in advance.

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21. A document control method applied to a document control system having a document control

apparatus for accumulating and controlling electronic documents and an external apparatus to which accumulation control service of said electronic document is provided from said document control apparatus comprising:

a period controlling step of storing document control period information per a unit of an electronic document when registering a document;

an access prohibiting step of prohibiting means for prohibiting an access from outside to an electronic document whose document control period has expired; and

a period updating step of updating said document control period per a unit of an electronic document.

22. The document control method according to claim 21, further comprising:

a document registering step of registering, updating or deleting said electronic document;

a document searching step of searching said accumulated and stored electronic document; and

a document transferring step of transmitting and receiving electronic document data with an external apparatus.

23. The document control method according to claim 21, wherein said document control period information is controlled together with a body of said

electronic document embedded in said electronic document in said period controlling step.

24. The document control method according to claim 21, wherein said electronic document comprises:

control information of an electronic document including said document control period information, a document owner, an access authority holder, or a document name;

10 attached information of an electronic document including summary information of a document or index information; and

a body of an electronic document requested for registration from outside.

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25. The document control method according to claim 21, wherein it is possible to alternatively set link information indicating a location of an entity of data forming said electronic document in a predetermined information region, and accumulate and control said entity of data in a storage location that is physically different from said predetermined information region.

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26. The document control method according to claim 21, further comprising a charging step of allowing an access from outside to said electronic

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document whose document control period has expired by imposing a predetermined charge.

27. The document control method according to
5 claim 26, wherein it is possible to store an electronic document that is most frequently accessed from outside for a fixed time of period and in a fixed volume with a special charge system different from a regular charge.

10 28. The document control method according to claim 22, wherein storing period information as said control period information of said electronic document set by said period controlling means in advance is notified to an outside accessing party according to a
15 remaining period when searching and inspecting said electronic document in said document searching step.

29. The document control method according to claim 21, further comprising:
20 a document accumulating step of accumulating said electronic document data;
a user accumulating step of accumulating registered users;
a charge accumulating step of accumulating charge
25 information; and
a history accumulating step of accumulating electronic document access histories.

30. The document control method according to claim 22, wherein, when update or deletion of said electronic document is instructed from outside, whether or not the update or the deletion of said electronic document should be accepted is determined based on access authority information set in advance in said document registering step.

31. A computer readable storage medium storing a program for executing a document control method applied to a document control system having a document control apparatus for accumulating and controlling electronic documents and an external apparatus to which accumulation control service of said electronic document is provided from said document control apparatus, wherein said document control method comprises:

a period controlling step of storing document control period information per a unit of an electronic document when registering a document;

an access prohibiting step of prohibiting means for prohibiting an access from outside to an electronic document whose document control period has expired; and

a period updating step of updating said document control period per a unit of an electronic document.

32. The storage medium according to claim 31,
wherein said document control method, further
comprising:

5 a document registering step of registering,
updating or deleting said electronic document;

a document searching step of searching said
accumulated and stored electronic document; and

10 a document transferring step of transmitting and
receiving electronic document data with an external
apparatus.

33. The storage medium according to claim 31,
wherein said document control period information is
controlled together with a body of said electronic
15 document embedded in said electronic document in said
period controlling step.

34. The storage medium according to claim 31,
wherein said electronic document comprises:
20 control information of an electronic document
including said document control period information, a
document owner, an access authority holder, or a
document name;

25 attached information of an electronic document
including summary information of a document or index
information; and

a body of an electronic document requested for registration from outside.

35. The storage medium according to claim 31,
5 wherein it is possible to alternatively set link
information indicating a location of an entity of data
forming said electronic document in a predetermined
information region, and accumulate and control said
entity of data in a storage location that is physically
10 different from said predetermined information region.

36. The storage medium according to claim 31,
wherein said document control method further comprises
a charging step of allowing an access from outside to
15 said electronic document whose document control period
has expired by imposing a predetermined charge.

37. The storage medium according to claim 36,
wherein it is possible to store an electronic document
20 that is most frequently accessed from outside for a
fixed time of period and in a fixed volume with a
special charge system different from a regular charge.

38. The storage medium according to claim 32,
25 wherein storing period information as said control
period information of said electronic document set by
said period controlling step in advance is notified to

an outside accessing party according to a remaining period when searching and inspecting said electronic document in said document searching step.

5 39. The storage medium according to claim 31, wherein said document control method further comprises:

 a document accumulating step of accumulating said electronic document data;

10 a user accumulating step of accumulating registered users;

 a charge accumulating step of accumulating charge information; and

 a history accumulating step of accumulating electronic document access histories.

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 40. The storage medium according to claim 32, wherein, when update or deletion of said electronic document is instructed from outside, whether or not the update or the deletion of said electronic document
20 should be accepted is determined based on access authority information set in advance in said document registering step.